

Remarks

The various parts of the Office Action (and other matters, if any) are discussed below under appropriate headings.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 4 and 5 is noted with appreciation. Allowable claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 11, and claim 5 has been represented as new claim 12 depended from claim 11. Accordingly, claims 4 and 5 are in proper form for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1-3 and 6-10 have been rejected as being anticipated by or unpatentable over Frank (US 6,662,373) and/or Puco et al. (US 5,909,802).

The rejected claims have been amended to clearly distinguish from the device described in Frank and the device described in Puco.

In particular, the Examiner contends that the vest described in Frank includes at least one rear portion being separate from, but attachable to at least one front portion by a zipper (24). Issue is taken as the vest described in Frank clearly lacks a rear portion separable from a front portion. Nevertheless, claim 1 has been amended to recite a rear portion and separate front portions, namely a left portion and a right portion which are separate from but attachable to the rear portion at a shoulder region and a waist region of each lateral side of the vest.

Frank does not disclose a vest with attachment means located at each shoulder region and each lateral waist region to attach the front portion of the vest to the rear portion of the vest.

Puco et al. discloses a vest that does have a front portion and a rear portion with attachment devices at each lateral side to attach the front portion to the rear portion. The vest of Puco et al., however, lacks attachment devices located at each shoulder to attach the front portion to the rear portion. Further, the front portion and the rear portions are not separate from each other but are attached together at each shoulder region.

In summary, neither Frank nor Puco et al. disclose a vest with a rear portion and separate but attachable front portions which are attachable to the rear portion at each shoulder region and the respective waist regions on the natural sides of the clothing article.

Still further, any combination of the devices taught in Frank with the device taught in Puco et al. would not be a combination which would reach the present invention as defined in the amended claims as neither Frank nor Puco et al. disclose a vest with a rear portion and separate but attachable front portions which are attachable to the rear portion at each shoulder region.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, request is made for timely issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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